Value congruence and consumer’s satisfaction towards online banking – the mediation role of affective commitment

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**Abstract:** Value congruence (VC) and its impact on customers’ satisfaction towards online banking practices rarely appear in the literature of services marketing. The aim of this inquiry is to explore the influence of VC towards customer’s satisfaction towards online banking and examine the mediating role of affective commitment in the Bangladeshi online banking service context. This research applied survey method for the accumulation of information. Data was analysed by means of descriptive statistics followed by exploratory factor analysis, confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modelling. The findings uncovered that the positive impact of VC on customers’ satisfaction is stronger when affective commitment play as a mediating function. This research also found evidence that increasing service quality to optimise customers’ satisfaction in this sector is not enough since the managers need to concentrate on customers’ perceived value, as well as to design the services that are truly perceived by their customers.

**Keywords:** value analysis, affective commitment, satisfaction, online banking, Bangladesh.


**Introduction**

Schiffman and Kanuk (2007) defined consumer behaviour as the vibrant communication of affect and cognition in an environment in which consumers conduct exchanges for their everyday lives. That is why customers are the central actors of all economic activities regardless of the type of business. In the service sector, particularly in banking, marketing philosophies have always emphasised the importance of acquiring and sustaining long-term relationships with their target customers (Henning-Thurau et al., 2002). In fact, the concept of marketing revolves around subjects like customer relationship, customers’ perceived values, customers’ expected service quality and satisfaction (Berry, 1995; Gwinner et al., 1998; Jamal and Naser, 2002; Mir and Rehman, 2013).

In addition, Kaynak and Kucukemiroglu (1992) identified which are the criteria influencing a customer’s choice for the services of a specific bank. Their...
M & M research highlighted that the majority of customers prefers fast and effective both online and offline services; friendly environment followed by efficient transactions and convenient location of the bank. Bloemer et al. (1998) established that bank image, perceived value, perceived service quality and satisfaction may determine customers’ loyalty towards a specific retail bank. Stafford (1994) also found that generally customers expect courtesy, friendliness from the bank’s staff, fair pricing, concerned management team, and stability in delivering the services.

Even though online banking has been successfully enforced in many developed countries (Pikkarainen et al., 2004; Chong, 2010), there is a rising propensity of the customers’ acceptance of online banking in developing economies as well, e.g. Bangladesh (Gurau, 2002; Chong, 2010). Shih and Fang (2004) argued that internet banking is a new type of information system that provides various updated resources from the Internet to enable the customers to perform various financial activities in a virtual space. Ali and Akter (2010) also revealed that the banking sector in Bangladesh has been going through a transition period, as the industry shifting from the traditional banking operation to the online banking culture. This finding also suggests that there is a gradual maturation of the online banking culture in Bangladesh which needs immense research in this respect (Nupur, 2010). Because of the stiff competition among the existing commercial banks in Bangladesh, the majority of the participants in this industry are looking to provide highest services to their target customers to attain the desired satisfaction (Ferdous and Towfique, 2008). That is why managers as well as the industry actors are really thirsty to fulfill the requirement of their clients by understanding their perceived value to increase their loyalty towards their banks (Danaher and Vanessa, 1996; Webster, 1991; Chan and Cui, 2004, Gaski and Etzel, 1986).

The overall aim of this empirical inquiry is to study the relationship between value congruence and customer’s satisfaction with online banking in Bangladesh. This research will also examine the mediating function of affective commitment in between the value congruence and satisfaction of the customers’ towards online banking under the setting of the Bangladeshi online banking environment. There is a research gap in the current literature with respect to the above mentioned relationship being tested from the position of the online banking of a developing country like Bangladesh. In summation, this research also provides a guideline for local and international commercial banks with fruitful information that is important for satisfying their customers. As a result this research will definitely offer a direction to draw strategic marketing intelligence for managers in terms of a more honest understanding of their clients.

**Construct development**

Numerous research support that customer satisfaction from a given service purchase is the measurement of how that services meet or exceed customer expectations. In fact, researchers in this area also revealed that satisfaction of the customers must be highly prioritized in order for an online banking
business to be successful (Saha and Zhao, 2005; Casalo et al., 2008; Raman et al., 2008). According to Saha and Zhao (2005) customers’ satisfaction is a compilation of the ending results of their positive perception, values, evaluation and their psychological reflection during the consumption process. In other words, the overall customer satisfaction also comprises the cognitive and affective assessment of the customers in order to attain their satisfaction with respect to a specific object as well (Saha and Zhao, 2005; Yau, 2007).

As a whole, a loyal satisfied customer is the one, who always takes less time to make a decision to purchase, is less amenable towards the prices and manifests less concentration on the competitor’s advertising messages (Timothy et al., 2007). Researchers like Umoren (2009) in his study explained that satisfied clients not merely extend their patronage intention towards service providers, but as well push the prospect of the service enterprise to others.

As a result, to reach the highest gratification from the target customers a thoughtful assessment of the service quality by the customers is highly required (Shoeb, 2011). SERVQUAL is one of the most well-liked and standard tool to measure service quality from the perception of customers (Nitecki, 1995; Hernon and Calvert, 1996; Hernon and Altman 1998). This instrument was introduced by Parasuraman et al. (1988) to evaluate the overall customers’ observation of service, the quality of a service system. In the early stage SERVQUAL was measured through ten dimensions (Parasuraman et al., 1985) (reliability; responsiveness; competence; creditability; access; courtesy; security; communication; reading/knowing the client; and tangibles). At present, SERVQUAL is measured by five dimensions (tangibles; reliability; responsiveness; assurance; and empathy (Parasuraman et al., 1985)). This research will measure satisfaction of the online banking customers by using five dimensions of the SERVQUAL instruments (Parasuraman, 2004).

In service context, consumers’ overall behaviour depends not only on the functional attributes of services, but also on the symbolic meanings of the services (Johar and Sirgy, 1991; Sirgy et al., 2000). That is why there is a huge dominance of value congruence and affective commitment to read the customer’s overall satisfaction. Researchers defined value congruence as the resemblance between personal values and the values associated with an object, such as a service (online Banking services) which sustains a substantial and positive influence on affective commitment (Arthur et al., 2006; Cable and Edwards, 2004; Finegan, 2000; Ostroff et al., 2005).

On the other hand, affective commitment refers to the feelings of loyalty, belonging and affiliation which create a desire of the customers as well as of the organization to have the relationship going forward (Morgan and Hunt, 1994). As a result, affective commitment is one of the most effective kinds of faithfulness manifested by the firms for developing mutual relationships with the clients. In the same manner in the service context like online banking scenario, customers' values are significant because the evaluation of services develops in the absence of tangible attributes (Berry, 1995; Haytko, 2004).
consequence, researchers agreed that value congruence is important for a service provider in order to construct and maintain solid client satisfaction (Lovelock and Wright, 2002; Zeithaml et al., 2006).

Grounded along the above literature, the following conceptual framework (Figure 1) was developed for further empirical analysis:

**Figure 1. Conceptual Model of Relationships among Key Variables Notes: VC = Value congruence; AC= Affective Commitment; SAT= Satisfaction**

![Conceptual Model of Relationships among Key Variables](image)

Source: Authors’ own research.

To test this model (Figure 1), this research will test three hypotheses. Ergo, this study will examine the direct outcome of value congruence (VC) on affective commitment (AC) (H1), the direct effect of affective commitment (AC) on Customers Satisfaction towards Online Banking Services (SAT) (H2), then talk about the mediating effects of affective commitment (AC) in between value congruence (VC) and Customers Satisfaction towards Online Banking Services (SAT) (H3).

**Research methodology**

This research was a cross sectional study. The sample was selected from different private commercial banks in Bangladesh through applying convenient sampling process. The respondents were selected through convenient sampling using the shopping mall intercept technique. All the respondents were picked from the capital of Bangladesh (Dhaka). The researchers picked the respondents from Dhaka, as the capital is the main hub of all commercial and financial transactions. In addition, Dhaka city is comprised with most of the private commercial banks and their branches, especially areas like: Motijheel, Banani, Gulshan, Uttara, Mohammadpur, Mirpur and Farmgate. This research initially distributed 300 questionnaires to the targeted respondents. Yet, only 250 responses were obtained. After the final screening, this study only used 245 of the answers for the final data analysis. The questionnaire consisted of 14 items to measure and empirically test the relationship among the variables. This research used four items for value congruence adapted from Zhang and Bloemer (2011). For the measurement of affective commitment this research adapted four items from Bansal et al. (2005) and Fullerton (2003). In order to measure customers’ satisfaction with online banking, six items were adapted from Shoeb (2011). For all the items, we used the seven-point Likert scale with the following analogy: strongly disagree (1); moderately disagree (2); slightly
disagree (3); neutral (4), slightly agree (5); moderately agree (6); and strongly agree (7). Apart from the descriptive study employed in this research, we also used exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis. For testing the proposed hypotheses this study used the structural equation modelling technique.

**Data analysis**

In terms of gender, the sample was made up of 60% male respondents and 30% female respondents; in terms of age, 70% were between 25 to 35 years old followed by 30% above 36. In terms of occupation, 40% were employees of different private companies, 15% were from public companies and the remaining of 45% of respondents were students from different public and private universities in Bangladesh. Among the respondents as far as income range is concerned, 40% were below the monthly income range of TK. 25,000 to TK. 40,000 (Bangladeshi Taka), 15% were between TK. 15,000 to TK. 30,000, while only 45% were below TK. 10,000. Most of the respondents (80%) were customers from local private commercial banks, while 20% of them were from international commercial banks.

The internal consistency of the all the measurement items was assessed by using Cronbach's alpha. The Cronbach's alpha for the overall scale (14 items) was 0.87. Thus this research confirmed that all the measurement items in the instruments are in an acceptable range. So the result shows the stability and consistency of the items in the instruments were good, fact that helped this research to move forward to statistical tests.

In the second stage of the data analysis this research applied exploratory factor analysis to identify the structure of the proposed variables from 14 items. The overall amount of sampling adequacy (MSA) was 0.831 (Kaiser, 1974). This research applied to principal component analysis, which resulted in three components with eigenvalues exceeding 1, explaining 40.011%, 20.754%, 10.838% of the variance respectively. The initial eigenvalues also showed that the first factor explained 40.011% of the variation, the second factor 20.754% of the variation, and the third factor 10.838% of the variance. The value of the commonalities was all above 0.3 which in further confirming that each items shared some common variance with other details. Concerning the structure of the variables this research was notified three separate, distinct dimensions of each factor. The first element was identified by the researchers as value congruence with alpha = 0.82. The second factor was labelled as affective commitment with alpha value 0.82 and the final factor labelled as customer satisfaction (alpha=. 82)(See Table 1).
Table 1. Summary of Exploratory Factor Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor Name</th>
<th>Component Variables</th>
<th>Factor Loading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Value congruence (VC)</td>
<td>I perceived my current bank as creative, uniqueness on their online banking services (V1)</td>
<td>.767</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alpha = .82</td>
<td>My bank is independent, self-reliant and self-sufficient of its online banking services(V2)</td>
<td>.741</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M (SD) = 5.39 (. 19)</td>
<td>My bank is capable, competent, effective and efficient (V3)</td>
<td>.762</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My bank preserving public image (V4)</td>
<td>.745</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective Commitment (AC)</td>
<td>I feel emotionally tied to my current Bank’s online services (A1)</td>
<td>.624</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alpha = .82</td>
<td>I feel like this bank as a portion of my daily online transaction (A2)</td>
<td>.785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M (SD) = 5.31 (. 25)</td>
<td>I feel a strong sense of belonging to my Bank (A3)</td>
<td>.625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My Bank has a great personal meaning for me (A4)</td>
<td>.704</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customers Satisfaction (CS)</td>
<td>Assuring Customers with accuracy and confidentiality of their personal Information (Sat1)</td>
<td>.745</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alpha = .82</td>
<td>Convenient access to all the online Banking services facilitate by visually appealing sign (Sat2)</td>
<td>.751</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M (SD) = 5.19 (. 30)</td>
<td>Banks understand the needs of the users (Sat3)</td>
<td>.630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dependability in handling customers’ service problems (Sat4)</td>
<td>.725</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The bank provides services as it promised to me (Sat5)</td>
<td>.634</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The bank keeps informed me when new services will add in their online menu (Sat6)</td>
<td>.781</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Principal components analysis for 14 items (N = 250), M = overall mean; SD – overall standard deviation; extraction method: principal axis factoring. Rotation method: varimax with Kaiser normalization, the rotation converged in 6 iterations.

Source: Authors’ own research.

This research applied confirmatory factor analysis to prove the generalizability of the multidimensional measures of the constructs in this field. To improve the fitness of the model, we revised the individual construct by looking at their modification indices. As a result this research made certain adjustments on the value congruence and affective commitment construct. Results from the CFA were summarized in Table 3. Moreover, we calculated the AVE (average variance extracted) for each construct. The results uncovered that the loadings were greater than 0.6 thus confirming the convergent validity. Finally the correlation among the three constructs was less than 0.65 which also confirms the discriminate validity. All the fit indices demonstrated adequate fit for each construct (see Table 2).

Table 2. Level of acceptance of the individual construct

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theoretical construct</th>
<th>Model</th>
<th>χ²</th>
<th>d.f.</th>
<th>χ²/d.f.</th>
<th>GFI</th>
<th>AGFI</th>
<th>RMSEA</th>
<th>CFI</th>
<th>NFI</th>
<th>TLI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Value Congruence (VC)</td>
<td>Default (4 items)</td>
<td>246.08</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>6.835</td>
<td>0.867</td>
<td>0.817</td>
<td>0.126</td>
<td>0.657</td>
<td>0.629</td>
<td>0.548</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Revised (4 items)</td>
<td>29.695</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2.120</td>
<td>0.980</td>
<td>0.961</td>
<td>0.048</td>
<td>0.951</td>
<td>0.905</td>
<td>0.927</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective Commitment (AC)</td>
<td>Default (4 items)</td>
<td>19.716</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9.858</td>
<td>0.978</td>
<td>0.894</td>
<td>0.144</td>
<td>0.928</td>
<td>0.913</td>
<td>0.814</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Revised (4 items)</td>
<td>2.158</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.158</td>
<td>0.996</td>
<td>0.960</td>
<td>0.075</td>
<td>0.992</td>
<td>0.988</td>
<td>0.950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customers’ Satisfaction (SAT)</td>
<td>Default (6 items)</td>
<td>6.312</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.156</td>
<td>0.983</td>
<td>0.956</td>
<td>0.055</td>
<td>0.971</td>
<td>0.967</td>
<td>0.923</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Authors’ own research.
The entire model was tested through structural equation modelling technique based on the measurement model from the CFA analysis (Figure 2). The fit indices of the full model were $\chi^2/df=2.835$ ($\chi^2=3876.123$, df=1367); GFI=.941; AGFI=.925; RMSEA=.042; CFI=.920; NFI=.914.

**Figure 2. Hypothesized model of relationships among key variables notes:** VC = Value congruence; AC = Affective Commitment; SAT = Satisfaction

Source: Authors’ own research.

This research used the results of the direct and indirect effects between value congruence and customer satisfaction towards online banking. The total effect was 0.74 with an indirect effect of 0.64 and direct effect of 0.10. Thus, we concluded that the indirect effect on affective commitment was more prevalent than the direct effect in explaining the total effect between the value congruence and customer satisfaction towards online banking services. Hence, we found out that Bangladeshi customers are highly satisfied with the current services of the online banking system when affective commitment plays a strong mediating role. Thus we can conclude that a strong mediating effect flows from VC to AC to SAT. As a result this research accepted H3 (Table 3). The detailed result from AMOS output is presented below. Aside from that this research also proves that there is a substantial relationship between value congruence and affective commitment. As a result this research also accepted hypothesis (1). On the other hand the relationship between affective commitment and customer satisfaction is also significant and as a result Hypothesis 2.
Overall the results of the structural equation modelling show that: (a) the effect of value congruence on customers affective commitment to online banking is significant and positive; (b) the significant positive impact also exists between the affective commitment and customer satisfaction towards online banking; (c) the affective commitment appears strong in mediating the relationship between value congruence and customer satisfaction towards online banking in Bangladesh; (d) the study further explored that the relationship between banks and their respective customers is one of the most important factors in the success of this type of business. As a result the bank managers should look at the customers’ values as well as the satisfaction criteria by improving the service quality in their online banking system.

Conclusions, managerial implications, limitations and future research

This article brings into discussion the concepts of value congruence, affective commitment and customer satisfaction by creating a framework for analysing the relationship of the online banking sector with its customers in Bangladesh. The answers from the inquiry revealed that aside from analysing only the service quality items, managers and researchers may also require to identify the psychological characteristics of the customers of the banks that frequently use various online services. This enquiry also shows that managers from different commercial banks need to create and maintain significant perceived value for their online banking services towards their customers in order to retain the highly satisfied customers. As a result the managers need to identify which values are the most important to their target customers in order to satisfy them. To remain competitive in this industry, it is very important for the bank managers to understand all the aspects of the values in order to produce competitive services to meet the customers’ tastes and preferences (Khan and Rohi, 2013).

That is why bank managers need to boost their service values that are clearly distinguishable from their competitors’ services. The result also revealed that the customers’ perceived satisfaction is still lagging behind the desired level of satisfaction from online banking facilities. The findings of this research also confirmed that banks should raise more awareness related to bringing in new services or different online banking products for their customers. From the managerial perspective, our research also suggests that

Table 3. The estimates of the mentioned variable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Path</th>
<th>Estimates (Estimate of regression weight)</th>
<th>S.E (Standard error of regression weight)</th>
<th>C.R (Critical ratio of regression weight)</th>
<th>P (Level of significance for regression weight)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Affective Commitment ← Value Congruence</td>
<td>0.491</td>
<td>0.074</td>
<td>5.233</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction ← Affective Commitment</td>
<td>0.621</td>
<td>0.139</td>
<td>7.315</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Authors’ own research.
the marketing managers of a bank need to take into consideration the values of their target customers through improving marketing performance by providing more added value to their services connected to their online products items (Mone et al., 2013).

This empirical research established the relationship among the value congruence, affective commitment and customer satisfaction towards the incipient online banking in Bangladesh. The authors have pioneered this research in Bangladesh in the context of banking customers using modified items and tools for the constructs. Further lines of research could relate to investigating the moderating impact of gender between value congruence and affective commitment in order to come up with the in depth understanding of the customer behaviour towards this sector.

References


